

What is a Watershed?

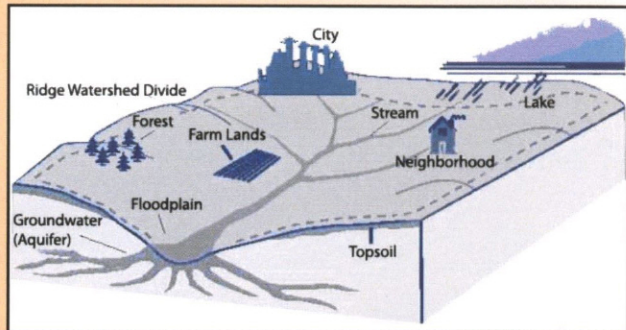
A watershed is an area of land that drains to a common point, such as a nearby creek, stream, river or lake. Every small watershed drains to a larger watershed that eventually flows to the ocean.

Watersheds support a wide variety of plants and wildlife and provide many outdoor recreation opportunities. By protecting the health of our watershed we can preserve and enhance the quality of life for the residents of Somerset.

What is Stormwater Runoff?

Stormwater is water from rain or melting snow and is located within a watershed. It flows from rooftops, over paved streets, sidewalks and parking lots, across bare soil, and through lawns and storm drains. As it flows, runoff collects and transports soil, pet waste, silt, pesticides, fertilizer, oil and grease, litter and other pollutants, which drains directly into our streams.

Polluted stormwater contaminates streams, rivers and lakes. It can kill or damage plants, fish, and wildlife, while degrading the quality of our water.



Useful Links:

Environmental Protection Agency

- cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/index.cfm
- cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/index.cfm?action=min_measure&min_measure_id=4

Kentucky Stormwater Association

- www.kystormwater.org

Upper Cumberland Watershed Watch

- www.uppercumberlandriver.org

For More Information:

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<http://water.ky.gov/>

Protect our Streams

Clean Water



Healthy Life

SOMERSET, KY

The Facts About Stream Corridors

Streams are a very important natural resource. Streams, and the natural corridors along them, provide a number of important environmental services that make our region a quality place to live. If one has a stream running through his or her backyard, business, or local park, protecting it with buffer zones is a good idea.

A buffer zone is an unmowed vegetated area that is adjacent to a water source. Buffer zones reduce stream bank erosion, preserve the adjacent floodplain, and increase water quality by filtering pollutants. The larger the buffer zone, the more protection and water quality benefits a buffer zone will provide.



Riparian zones filter contaminants and reduce erosion.

What's the Problem?

Many property owners may not realize that what they do on their land impacts neighborhoods, stream habitats, and water quality downstream. The condition of land that surrounds streams directly affects property values, the health of the stream and the well-being and safety of citizens.

Streams are dynamic systems that change over time, according to the condition of the land around them. All of our streams are currently impacted by our activities.



Landscaping with non-native plants



Mowing to the edge of streams



Damaged root systems



- Destabilized streambanks
- Degraded water quality
- Loss of natural habitat

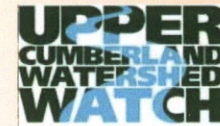
What Can You Do?

Residents have an opportunity to help improve the quality of stream corridors whether they live along stream corridors or not. Following are some simple steps that one can take to help improve the quality of stream corridors in the Somerset area:

- Do not mow up to the edge of a stream; avoid mowing within 10 to 25 feet of the edge of a stream. This will create a safe buffer zone that will help minimize erosion and naturally filter storm water runoff.

- Plant native plants, grasses, trees, and bushes. One of the easiest and most inexpensive methods of protecting stream banks is to plant native plants. These are trees, shrubs, grasses, and herbaceous plants that are climatized to our area.

- Keep litter out of streams. Adopt a stream or form a stream team to become a steward for a designated stretch of waterway(s) within the region. Stream teams also plant trees and monitor water quality.



You live in the Upper Cumberland Watershed



Dumping is...

- Unsanitary
- Unsightly
- Unsafe for humans & wildlife